

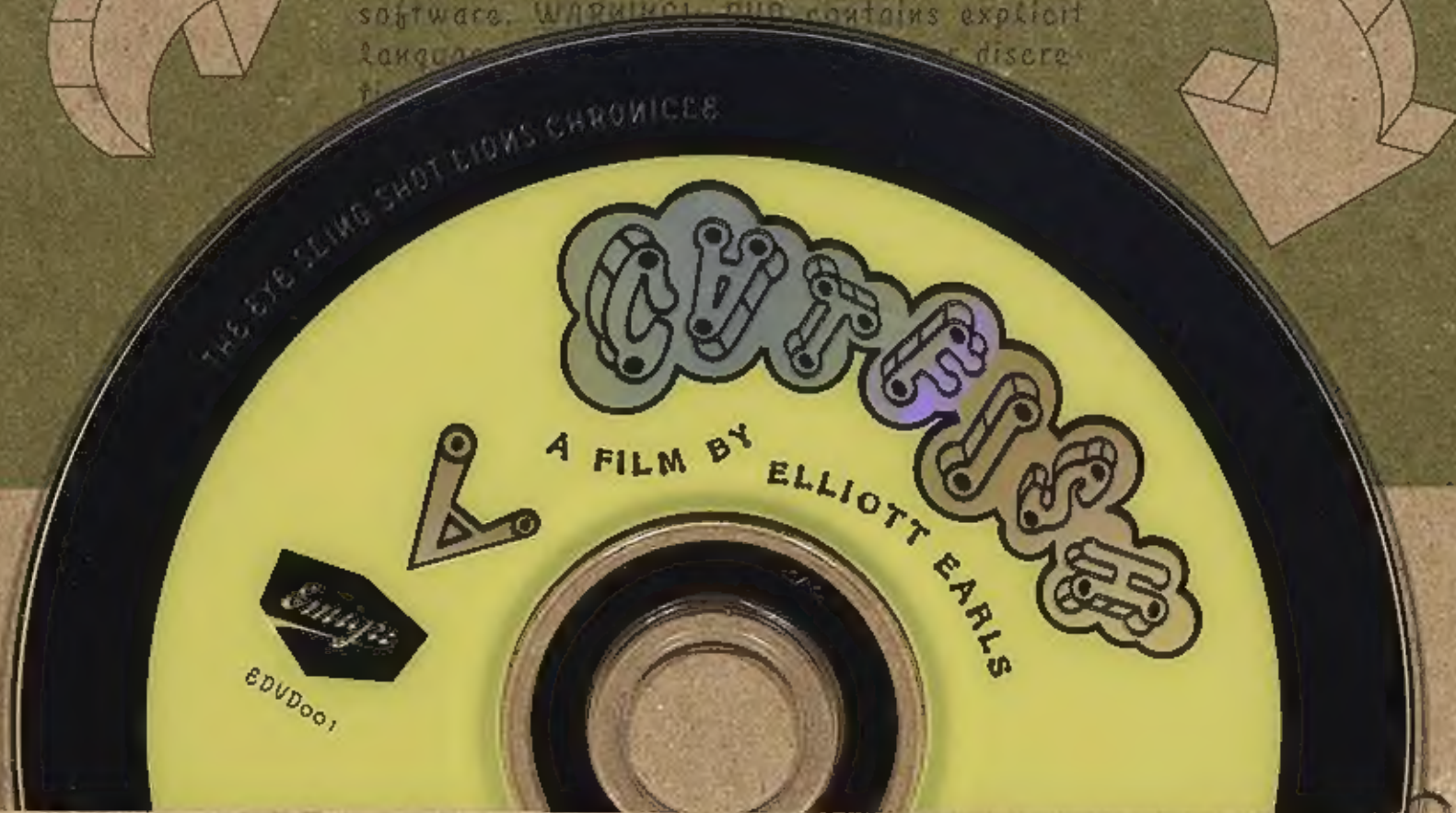


A FILM BY ELLIOTT EARLS





The enclosed Catfish DVD will play on most consumer DVD players and on any computer equipped with a DVD player and appropriate software. WARNING: DVD contains explicit language and some scenes of discrete



Granbrook Academy of Art Location Cast

Billy	Benjamin Stewart
Dr. Gombrock	Robert Kleyu
Mrs. Gombrock	Dagmar Frinta
Tommy Tong	David Tsai
Angus	Gosh McArar
Gerry	Jeff Williamson
Elliott	Elliott Earls
Eiz Williams Voice Over	Dawn Nye
Cyrus Catfish Voice Over	Kosta Stratigos

Performance Cast

Elliott	Elliott Earls
Nate	Aaron Eown
Pepper	Elizabeth Grubaugh
Production Assistance	Sean Rhodes

Granbrook House Location Film Crew

Production Assistance	Goshua Stephens
Primary Camera Man	Goshua Stephens
Aux. Camera Man	Chris Lopez
Location Dialog Recording	Ryan Frisk
Dialog Coach	Jeff Williamson

Granbrook Academy of Art Gig Crew

Camera Man	Goshua Stephens
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University of Michigan Performance

Camera Man	Goshua Stephens
Dennis Miller	Dennis Miller
Tom Bray	Tom Bray

Music

Songs written, produced and performed by Elliott Earls. Vocals on "Ged and Delia" by Darlene Earls.

Production

Video Editing	Elliott
3D Animations	
Interactivity	
Sound Design	
Music	
Animations	
All Instruments	
Photography	
Drawings	
Special Effects	
Lighting	
Set Design	
Set Construction	
Make Up	
Wardrobe	
Costume Design	
Electronics	
On Stage Hardware	
Computer Programming	
DVD Authoring	
DVD Interface	

This film was made possible by a generous grant from the "Elliott Puts His Money Where His Mouth Is Foundation." While the production of this film was financed completely by Elliott Earls, the manufacture and distribution of the DVD disc was made possible by the generosity and financial dexterity of Emigre, Inc.

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Spring 2002



produced in association with:



The Apollo Program

at Cranbrook Academy of Art

Spring 2002



EDVD001

Emigre

Emigre

Emigre



Emigre Number 62 & DVD001. Spring 2002.
DVD direction & production: Elliott Earls.
Magazine production: Rudy VanderLans. Copy
editor: Alice Polesky. Emigre Fonts: Zuzana
Licko. General manager: Tim Starback. Sales
and distribution: Ella Cross and Dan Offer.
Phone: (916) 451 4344. Fax: (916) 451 4351
Email: sales@emigre.com Emigre website:
www.emigre.com Magazine prepress and
printing: American Web, Denver, CO. Paper:
New Leaf Moxie Matte text; 60% recycled/
30% post-consumer waste. Cardboard folder
printing: Centerpoint Graphics, Portland, OR.
Cardboard: Sonoco Chipboard; 100% post-
consumer waste. Emigre (ISSN 1045-3717)
is published quarterly by Emigre, Inc., 4475
D Street, Sacramento, CA 95819, U.S.A.
Postmaster please send address changes to:
Emigre, 4475 D Street, Sacramento, CA
95819, U.S.A. Typefaces used on cover and
this page: Typhoid Mary & Venus Dioxide by
Elliott Earls. Emigre script logo designed
by John Downer.



Catfish

Recently, I've become convinced that computers are overshooting the mark. They provide too many functions I have no need for. If I could just lock in my current system and not have to change my software or laser printer ever again, I'd be a happy camper and I could concentrate on doing my work.

Instead, every few years I'm forced to upgrade at great cost and loss of precious time, and end up owning hardware and software with more bells and whistles than I have use for. My life as a graphic designer, while it was kick-started by computers, has now become complicated and miserable because of them.

That's one thing that impresses me about Elliott Earls, the creator of the DVD that provides this issue's main content. Whereas every computerized gadget presents a hindrance for me, Earls sees nothing but opportunity in it and embraces each one like it was his first born. Not only that; he makes them do what he wants. There are many other things that impress me about Earls's work, which is why Emigre is publishing his most ambitious accomplishment to date: Catfish.

It has always been problematic for me to assess the worth of Elliott Earls's work, or at least explain why I'm so attracted to it. One thing is certain: Earls work is difficult to ignore. There's not much design out there that is this weird. But weird is a value judgment and hardly a reason to publish anything, so I need to be more specific.

The first time I saw Elliott's work was in 1993 or so.

He sent me a series of posters advertising a set of typefaces that he had designed. Little did I know (did he?) that this was only the beginning of what would



become a cumulative production that would include ventures into uncountable disciplines (graphic design, music, poetry, criticism, soldering, performance art, movie making, writing, producing, programming, directing, comedy, self-publishing, instrument making, entrepreneurialism, teaching...). Nearly everything he created from the moment he graduated from Cranbrook

became part of this final project. Instead of looking at his work as a series of disconnected endeavors, he viewed it as one big journey that finds its climax on the Catfish DVD. The sheer scope of the project alone is intimidating and enough to justify publishing it.

To approach this project, and to best explain its purpose, it's easiest to consider Catfish as a designer monograph. In recent years, this show-and-tell format has been subjected to much experimentation and boundary pushing. British design studios such as Tomato and Fuel have stretched the monograph's traditional purpose of presenting and analyzing past accomplishments to include its use as a platform for creating new

work. The new use was specifically suited to explore the book format. With *Catfish*, however, Earls goes one step further and moves beyond the book altogether.

Catfish starts with an odd tale that brings Elliott to the office of a Dr. Gömbrick. The scene that unfolds shows us Earls, confused and uncertain about his work, and Gömbrick reassuring him to face that uncertainty, that art is not easy, and in order to succeed he must risk everything. But most importantly (and here Gömbrick leans forward to impress the point) he tells Elliott that the artist is simply an instrument of his art and not to fret over its purpose. Let others deal with that. Elliott is not convinced. But help is on the way and an unbelievable plot follows that subjects Elliott to a biochemical experiment that gives him the fortitude needed to make his art and gives us a clue why Earls's work looks so alien. The Sub Rosa scene is hilarious; but it's undeniable, some of us are wired differently or are simply more awake.

This opening sequence functions like the introductory essay in a standard designer monograph. It is also a setup for what follows - a cavalcade of material announced as "The work of Elliott Earls." From there the story only gets stranger. Instead of a gallery of designs, we see Elliott "performing" his work, literally walking in and out of his own designs. He becomes part of his work. He is the work (or the instrument?).

By stepping far outside the bounds of graphic design, Elliott Earls's work is destined to be judged by critics in the adjoining arts; break on through to the other side, and you'll have to deal with a new set of rules. But

Elliott's work may fall in that hazy area: too strange for design and too much design to be considered art. And yet, compared to Elliott's mastery of techniques, many of today's artists who employ graphic design look like featherweights.

In establishing the value of Elliott's work, it is perhaps a sign of insecurity to mention that others seem to be equally impressed. But his resume speaks loudly. After the famous designer Toscani left Bennetton's design lab Fabbrica in Italy, Earls was flown in to fill the gap. Recently, following in the footsteps of Katherine McCoy, Laurie Haycock Makela and the late Scott Makela, he was appointed head of the Graphic Design department at the prestigious Cranbrook Academy of Art. Before were stints as a designer at a record company, performance artist, and web designer. He even delivered the commencement address at Maine College of Art, the text of which, like most everything else he has undertaken, found its way onto the Catfish DVD.

One reason educational institutions may be interested in Earls's talents as a teacher is his command of technology. Schools understand the necessity to properly prepare their students for the technological and interdisciplinary world we now all live in. Few people I know in design indulge in technology the way Earls does. He is a renaissance man and a modern all poured into one, wearing multiple hats and embracing everything that technology has to offer without being intimidated.

And then there's the work itself. My feeble attempts to match Earls's work with words is to suggest it's American culture put through a blender. I imagine a

young Elliott going through the American school system – grade school, high school, college, graduate school. He's a sponge, quietly soaking it all up. After school he watches TV and movies, he reads a lot, listens to music, plays a little soccer. Meanwhile he's wondering what it all means. Then, years later, he produces Catfish, saying: "Hey America, it's my turn to speak. I've added it all up, and here's my contribution." Now it's up to us to make sense of it all.

Perhaps Catfish is not the kind of profound work that these troubled times demand from an artist or a designer. It's difficult to imagine what kind of work that would be. Art should make us open our eyes, no matter what times we live in, and show us our humanity, warts and all. Catfish does this. It is full of life – it's ambitious, probing, clumsy, inventive, and at times it's also very funny.

If nothing pleases you about Catfish, at least imagine the possibilities opened up by Earls's use and misuse of the different media he employs. Earls shows us what lies beyond normalcy, what lies beyond the obvious. And he convinces me that computers still rock.

"What's the point of waking up in the morning if you don't try to match the enormousness of the known forces in the world with something powerful in your own life?" said the writer Don DeLillo. For the past years, Elliott Earls has woken up and done just that. He's tried to make something powerful, something that gives purpose to his life, while giving us much to question and ponder. And he never foregoes an opportunity to entertain us. And if that isn't worth something. I don't know what is. RVDC



The Apollo Program

In 1993 Elliott Earls founded The Apollo Program, a company he would use to sell his typeface designs, music, posters, and CD-Rom releases.

In 1998 Emigre re-released a selection of Earls's fonts under the name The Apollo Program Font Set. The following pages show these fonts, interspersed with images of the CD-Rom releases Throwing Apples at the Sun and Eye Sling Shot Lions, which contain the actual interactive material from the performances shown on the DVD.



Font Set includes 7 Fonts.
Special On-Line Offer: \$117



5 Posters
Special On-Line Offer: \$15



Multi-Media CD-Rom
Special On-Line Offer: \$15



Multi-Media CD-Rom
Special On-Line Offer: \$15



4 Posters
Special On-Line Offer: \$11.25



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Stimulated



The Apollo Program Font Set

Designed by Elliott Earls

Licensed and Distributed by Emigre

Blue Eye Shadow

A	B	C	D	E	F
G	H	I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X
Y	Z	1	2	3	

U P P E R C A S E

a	b	c	d		
e	f	g	h	i	j
k	l	m	n	o	p
q	r	s	t	u	v
w	x	y	z	5	6
7	8				

L O W E R C A S E



U I G
S a W
d r o
s h a d o w



The Apollo Program Font Set
Designed by Elliott Earls
Licensed and Distributed by Emigre

g g Saw Drop Shadow



51 PT.



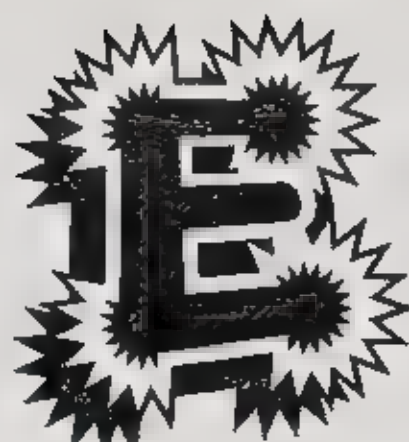
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64 PT.



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53 PT.



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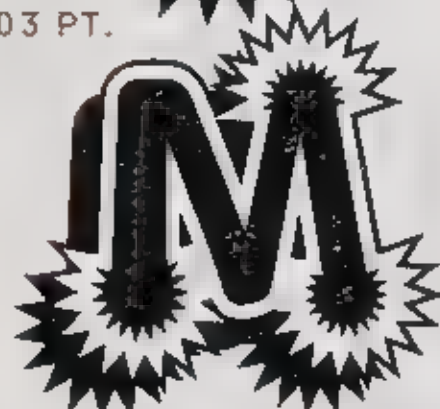
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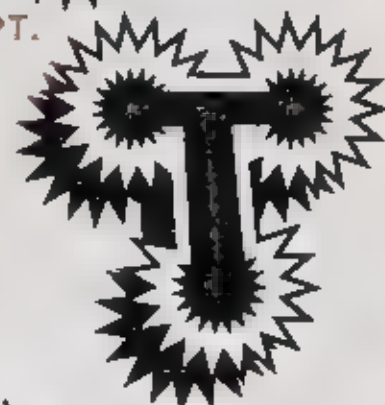
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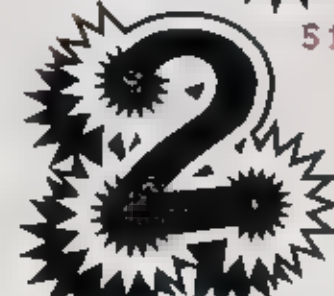
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103 PT.



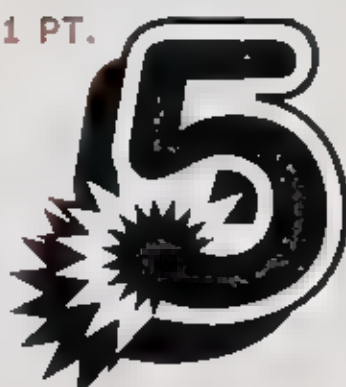
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103 PT.



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77 PT.



51 PT.



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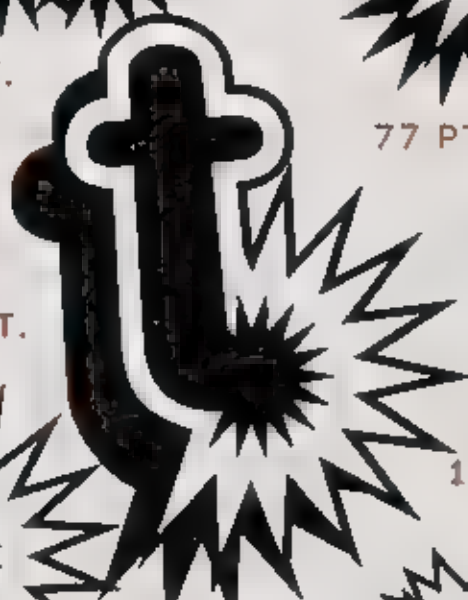
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77 PT.



115 PT.



51 PT.



38 PT.



45 PT.



58 PT.



103 PT.



26 PT.



77 PT.

TYPHOID

MARY

3 D. DARK

3

TYPHOID

MARY

3 D. LIGHT

a b c d e f g h i j k l m
n o p q r s t u v w x y z

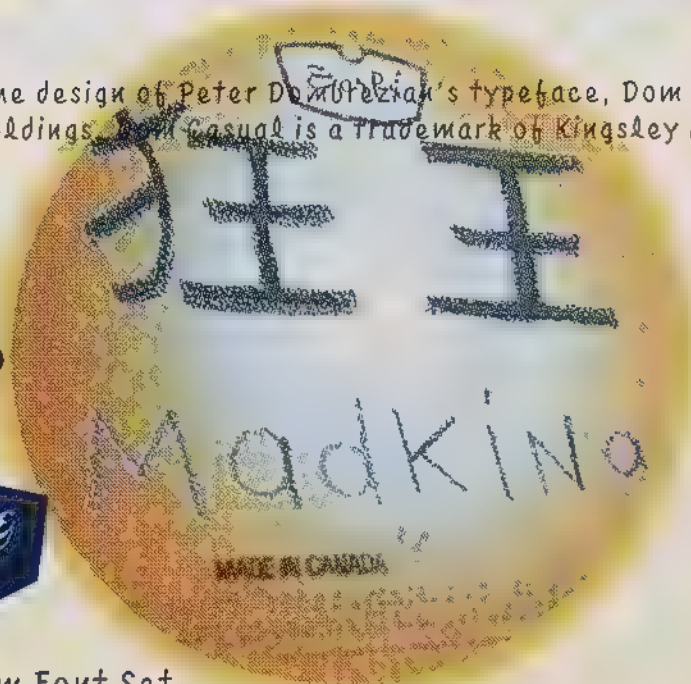
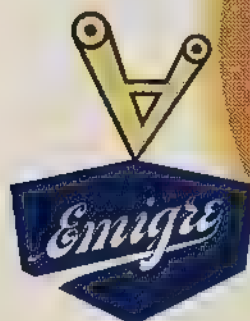
A B C D E F G H I J K

L M N O P Q R S T U

V W X Y Z

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Typhoid Mary is based on the design of Peter Dinklage's typeface, Dom Casual, with permission from Kingsley Holdings. Dom Casual is a trademark of Kingsley Holdings Corp.



The Apollo Program Font Set
Designed by Elliott Earls
Licensed and Distributed by Emigre

Typhoid Mary



The Apollo Program Font Set
 Designed by Elliott Sarks
 Licensed and Distributed by Emigre

Subluxation Perma

Aa Bb Cc Dd

A

B

C

D

Ee Ff Gg Hh

E

F

G

H

Ii Jj Kk Ll

I

L

Mm Nn Oo Pp

M

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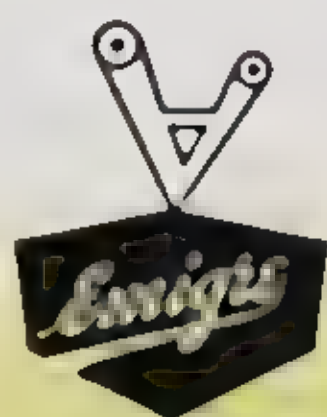
X

Yy Zz 1 2 3 4 5 6

Y

Z

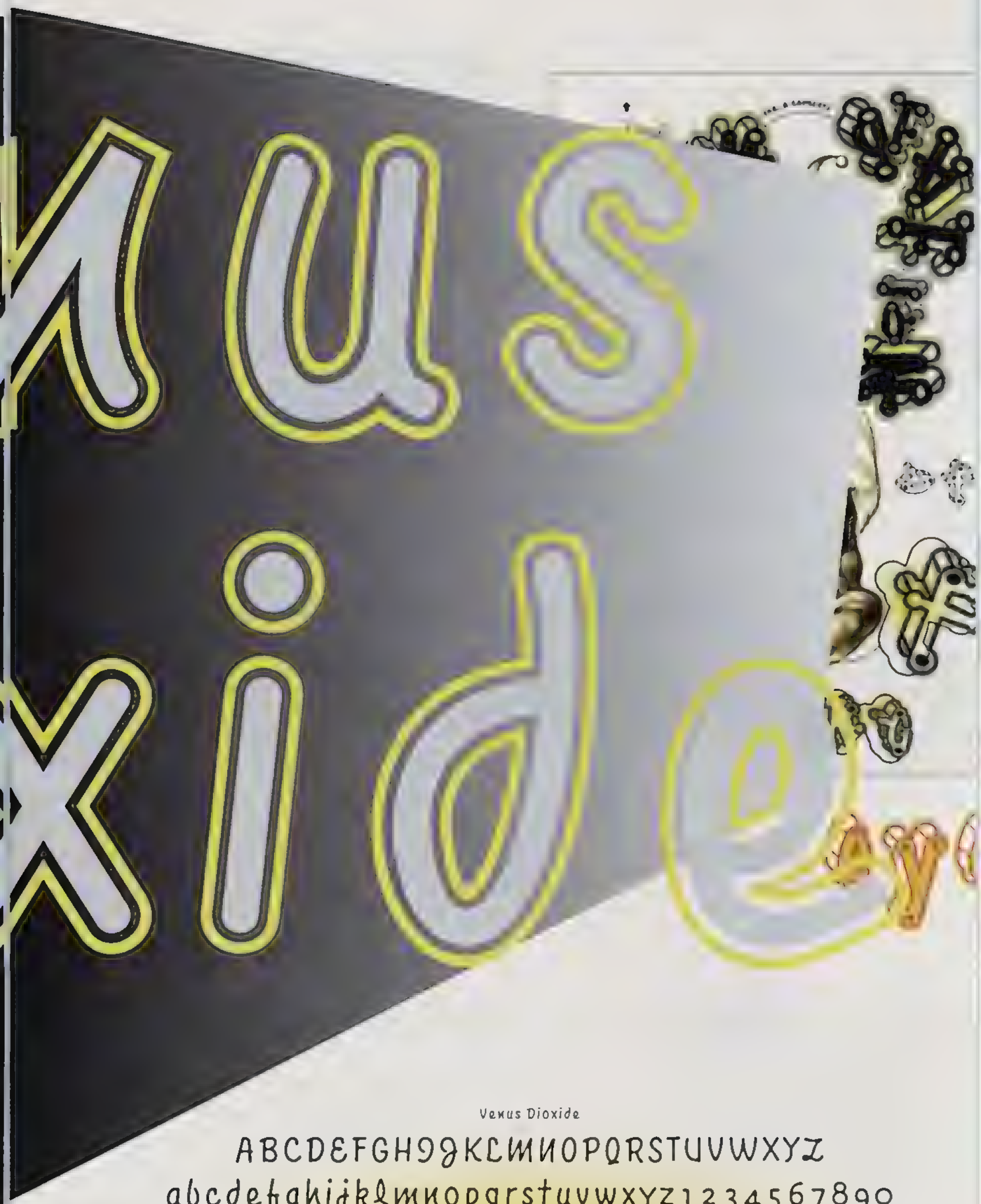
Venus
Dioxide



The Apollo Program Font Set
Designed by Elliott Bark
Licensed and Distributed by Emigre

Venus Dioxide



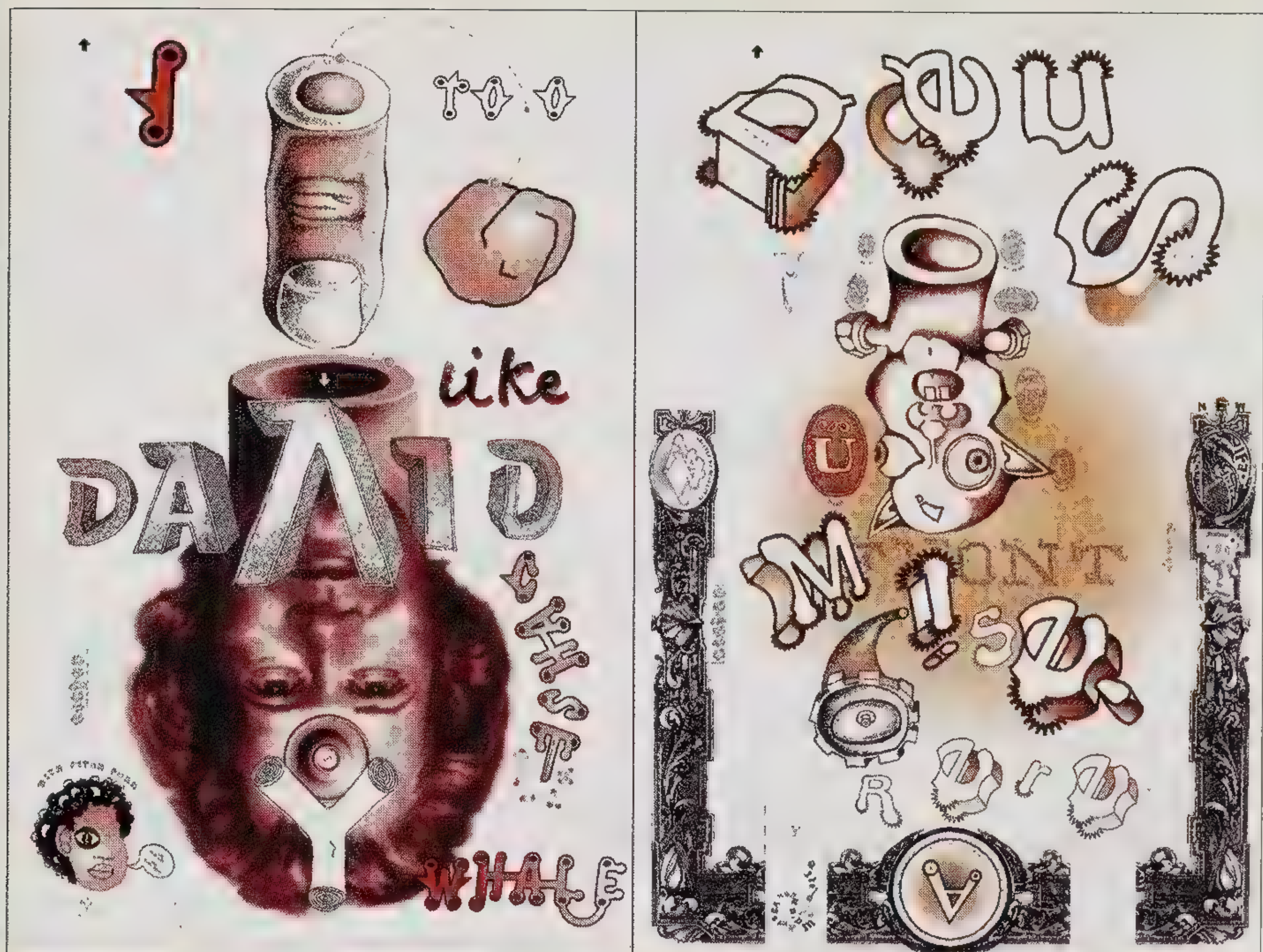


Venus Dioxide

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890

Venus Dioxide Outline

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890



ions poster set

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NOISE FOUR
COMING
SOON



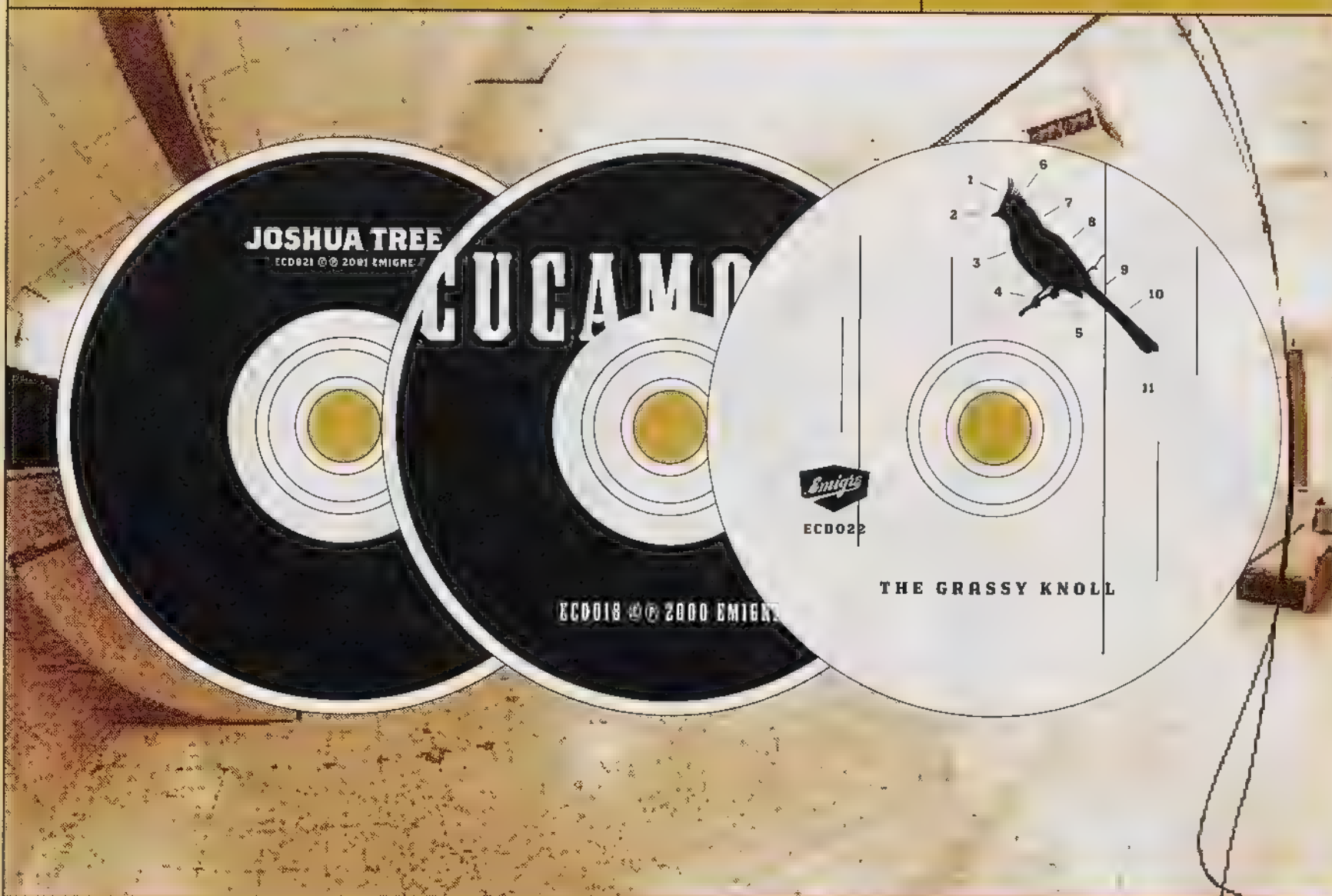
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Mrs Eaves

OpenType®



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











BY ZUZANA LICKO

Mrs Eaves OpenType

Mrs Eaves is the first Emigre font to be released in OpenType format. This format makes it possible to incorporate typographic features such as small caps, ligatures, old style numerals and lining numerals, all within one font file, thereby simplifying font management and usage. The Mrs Eaves OpenType package contains the equivalent of over 17 fonts. It includes everything in the Regular package, the Smart Ligatures package and more!

For example, installation of Mrs Eaves Roman OpenType requires installing just one file, which would require installing multiple files with the Type 1 PostScript format.

Type 1 PostScript Mac and PC

	MrsEavesScreenFgnts		MrsEavAllIPetCap.PFB
	MrsEavAllIPetCap		MrsEavAllIPetCap.PFM
	MrsEavAllISmaCap		MrsEavAllISmaCap.PFB
	MrsEavBol		MrsEavAllISmaCap.PFM
	MrsEavFra		MrsEavBol.PFB
	MrsEavIta		MrsEavBol.PFM
	MrsEavPetCap		MrsEavFra.PFB
	MrsEavRom		MrsEavFra.PFM
	MrsEavRomLin		MrsEavIta.PFB
	MrsEavSmaCap		MrsEavIta.PFM
	MrsEavesSmartLigScreenFonts		MrsEavJusLigBol.PFB
	MrsEavSmaLigBol		MrsEavJusLigBol.PFM
	MrsEavSmaLigIta		MrsEavJusLigIta.PFB
	MrsEavSmaLigRom		MrsEavJusLigIta.PFM
			MrsEavJusLigRom.PFB
			MrsEavJusLigRom.PFM
			MrsEavPetCap.PFB
			MrsEavPetCap.PFM
			MrsEavRom.PFB
			MrsEavRom.PFM
			MrsEavRomLin.PFB
			MrsEavRomLin.PFM
			MrsEavSmaCap.PFB
			MrsEavSmaCap.PFM

OpenType



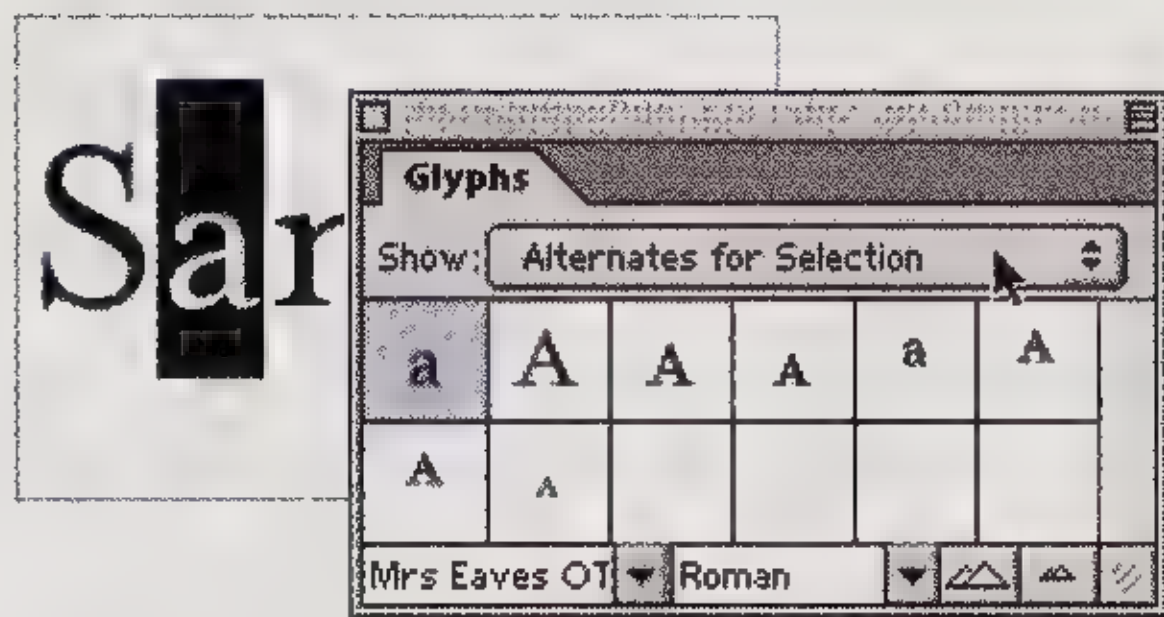
Cross Platform

OpenType is also a cross-platform format. An OpenType font file can be installed on both Macintosh and Windows platforms, and its installation requires installing just one file per font style. In comparison, the Type 1 PostScript format requires installation of multiple files per font style which are incompatible between Macintosh and Windows.

Advanced Typography

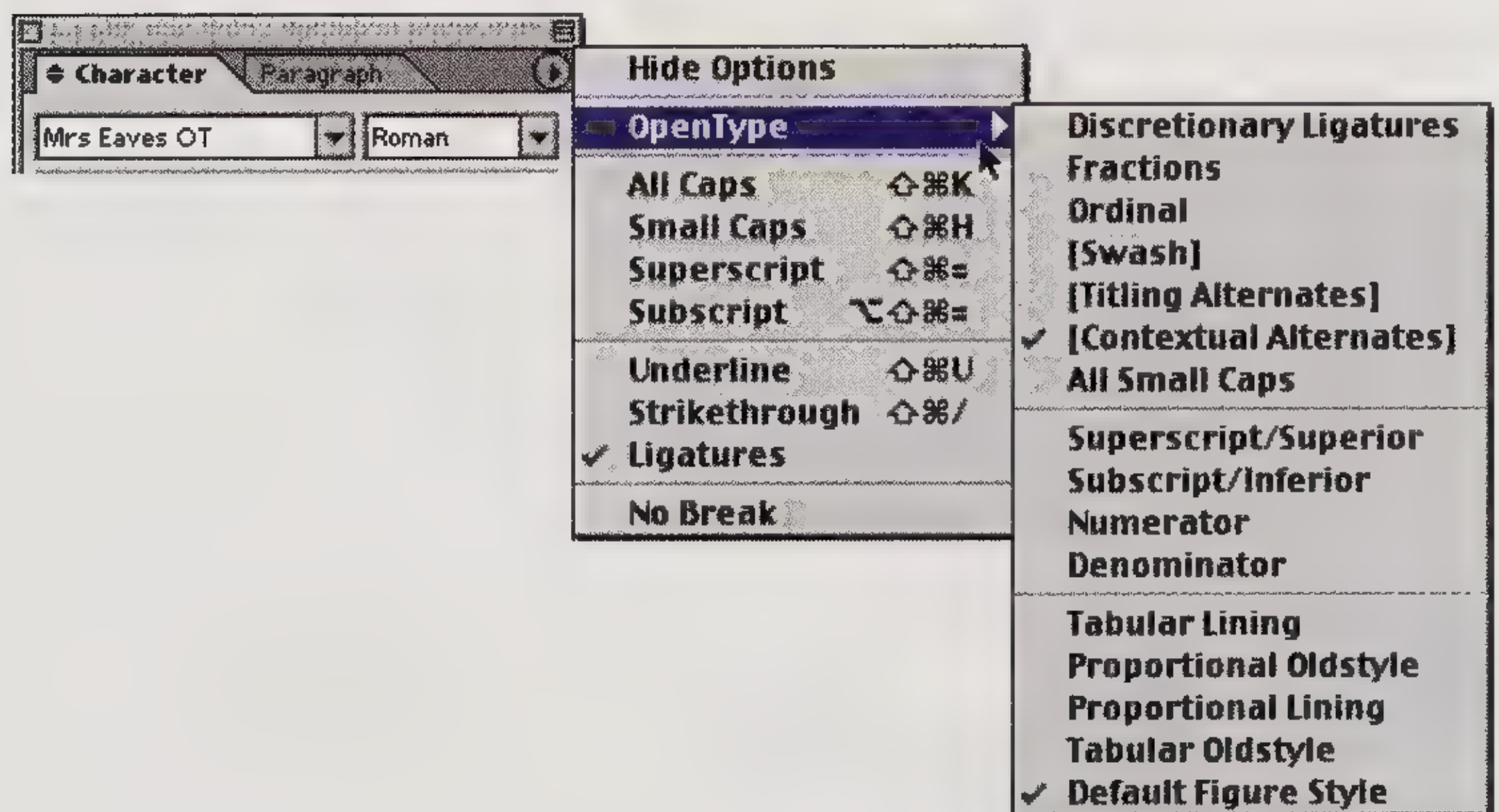
The Mrs Eaves OpenType fonts include hundreds of characters, many with alternate forms.

Glyphs Palette
from Adobe
InDesign 2.0



These alternate glyphs allow OpenType fonts to include various features, such as small caps, ligatures, old style numerals and lining numerals. Because these features are stored within a single font file, they are accessed through the application feature menu, rather than as separate fonts through the font menu.

(Accessing these features requires an application that supports OpenType features, such as Adobe InDesign 2.0)



Having features incorporated into one font file has several advantages, including:

- The ability to change fonts or styles without losing feature tags. For example, if lining numbers have been selected in Mrs Eaves Roman, and a portion of the text is changed to Mrs Eaves Bold, the lining numbers will automatically be changed to bold lining.
- More comprehensive kerning. Because all characters are within one font file, an OpenType font may contain kerning between features. For example, kerning pairs can be provided between ligatures and the regular characters.

• The ability to mix features from the OpenType menu without having to change fonts in the font menu, which simplifies font selection and management.

First & 58th

Discretionary Ligatures + Proportional Oldstyle Numerals | Ordinals

FIRST & 58TH

Small Caps + Proportional Lining Numerals | Small Caps + Ordinals

\$5.99

Proportional Lining Numerals

\$5.99

Proportional Oldstyle Numerals | All Small Caps

\$5.99

All Small Caps

\$599

Numerator | Proportional Lining Numerals | Numerator

• Improved text handling of ligatures. Because ligatures are handled as live text, it is possible to spell check text with ligatures. The application reads an “ffi” ligature as three characters instead of one. Ligatures can also be edited as live text; each character within a ligature can be selected and edited.

fir | fir | fir | for

1. No ligatures.
2. Ligatures activated.
3. Select the “i” in the ligature, and change to “o”.
4. Ligatures can be edited as regular text.

Mrs Eaves OpenType Features

The following features are provided in the Mrs Eaves OpenType Package:

Roman

All Caps
Small Caps
All Small Caps
Petite Caps (Denominator)
All Petite Caps (Denominator + ALLSC)
Ordinals
Ordinal Caps (Ordinals + SC or ALLC)
Basic Ligatures
Discretionary Ligatures
Accented Ligatures
Proportional Old Style Numbers
Proportional Lining Numbers
Tabular Old Style Numbers
Tabular Lining Numbers
Superior Numbers
Scientific Inferior Numbers
Numerator
Denominator
Arbitrary Fractions
Ornaments

Italic

All Caps
Basic Ligatures
Discretionary Ligatures
Accented Ligatures
Proportional Old Style Numbers
Proportional Lining Numbers
Tabular Old Style Numbers
Tabular Lining Numbers
Ornaments

Bold

All Caps
Basic Ligatures
Discretionary Ligatures
Accented Ligatures
Proportional Old Style Numbers
Proportional Lining Numbers
Tabular Old Style Numbers
Tabular Lining Numbers
Ornaments

Mrs Eaves OpenType

Roman, Italic & Bold

ABCDEF G © ® ? ! * ' " " " & abcdefgh @ \$ 0 1 2 3 5 8 9 € %

All Caps | Roman, Italic & Bold

ABCDEF G © ® ? ! * ' " " " & ABCDE @ \$ 0 1 2 3 5 8 9 € %

Small Caps | Roman only

ABCDEF G © ® ? ! * ' " " " & ABCDEF G @ \$ 0 1 2 3 5 8 9 € %

All Small Caps | Roman only

ABCDEF GHIJ © ® ? ! * ' " " " & ABCDEF GH @ \$ 0 1 2 3 5 8 9 € %

Petite Caps “Denominator” | Roman only

ABCDEF GHIJ © ® ? ! * ' " " " & ABCDEF GHIJ @ \$ 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 € %

All Petite Caps “Denominator + All Small Caps” | Roman only

ABCDEF GHIJ KL © ® ? ! * ' " " " & ABCDEF GHIJ KL @ \$ 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 € %

Ordinals | Roman only

abdehilmnorst 1st 2nd 3rd 4th M^{lle} M^{me} N^o D^r 1^{er} 1^{re} 2^e

Ordinal Caps “Ordinal + Small Caps or All Caps” | Roman only)

ABDEHILMNORST 1ST 2ND 3RD 4TH M^{ME} N^O D^R 1^{RE} 2^E

Basic Ligatures | Roman, Italic & Bold

fi fl ff ffi ffl fire flying offers affinities affloating

Discretionary Ligatures | Roman, Italic & Bold

AA MB Œ MD ME HE NK Ø MP VA ct gg gi it ky st ip py

Accented Ligatures | Roman, Italic & Bold

Á Ê È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ù Ú Û Ü

Mrs Eaves OpenType

Proportional Old Style Numbers | Roman, Italic & Bold

1234567890 Old style for use in lower case text

Proportional Lining Numbers | Roman, Italic & Bold

1234567890 LINING WITH CAPITAL TEXT

Tabular Old Style Numbers | Roman, Italic & Bold

1234567890 For setting tabular presentations

Tabular Lining Numbers | Roman, Italic & Bold

1234567890 For Setting Tabular Presentations

Superior Numbers & Scientific Inferior Numbers | Roman only

0123456789 0123456789 2² H₂O Footnote³⁶ h²=a²+b²

Numerator & Denominator | Roman only

0123456789&\$¢¥€%‰+={{{[]}}}

Fractions and Arbitrary Fractions | Roman only

1/2 1/3 2/3 1/4 3/4 1/8 3/8 5/8 7/8 1/10 1/16 3/16 1/32 3/32 1/64 1/100

Ornaments

❁ ❄ ❅ ❆ ❇ ❈ ❉ ❊ ❋ ❌ ❍ ❎ ❏ ❐ ❑ ❒ ❓ ❔ ❕ ❖ ❗ ❘ ❙ ❚ ❛ ❜ ❝ ❞ ❟ ❠ ❡ ❢ ❣ ❤ ❥ ❦ ❧ ❨ ❩ ❪ ❫ ❬ ❭ ❮ ❯ ❰ ❱ ❲ ❳ ❴ ❵ ❶ ❷ ❸ ❹ ❺ ❻ ❼ ❽ ❿ ⋄ ⋅ ⋆ ⋇ ⋈ ⋉ ⋊ ⋋ ⋌ ⋍ ⋎ ⋏ ⋐ ⋑ ⋒ ⋓ ⋔ ⋕ ⋖ ⋗ ⋘ ⋙ ⋚ ⋛ ⋜ ⋝ ⋞ ⋟ ⋠ ⋡ ⋢ ⋣ ⋤ ⋥ ⋦ ⋧ ⋨ ⋩ ⋪ ⋫ ⋬ ⋭ ⋮ ⋯ ⋰ ⋱ ⋲ ⋳ ⋴ ⋵ ⋶ ⋷ ⋸ ⋹ ⋺ ⋻ ⋼ ⋽ ⋾ ⋿ ⋰ ⋱ ⋲ ⋳ ⋴ ⋵ ⋶ ⋷ ⋸ ⋹ ⋺ ⋻ ⋼ ⋽ ⋾ ⋿

Mrs Eaves OpenType Package \$299

UPGRADES: Registered customers who have purchased both the Mrs Eaves Package and the Mrs Eaves Smart Ligatures Package may upgrade to the OpenType Package for \$149.

Thanks to John Butler for assistance with OpenType assembly (john@eccentrifuge.com).



a



THE_____JAN_VAN_EYCK_ACADEMIE_____
POST-ACADEMIC INSTITUTE FOR_____RESEARCH AND
PRODUCTION_____IN_____FINE ART, DESIGN, THEORY_____
_____INVITES

--> ARTISTS

--> DESIGNERS

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TO APPLY FOR A ONE OR TWO YEAR RESEARCH PERIOD, STARTING IN JANUARY 2003.

THE OBJECTIVES OF RESEARCHERS AND ADVISING RESEARCHERS ARE OF PRIMARY SIGNIFICANCE TO THE PROGRAMME AT THE JAN VAN EYCK ACADEMIE. RESEARCHERS ARE EXPECTED TO ESTABLISH THE AIMS, METHODOLOGIES AND REALISATION OF THEIR PROJECTS AS WELL AS TO BE ENGAGED WITH WHAT IS BEING PRODUCED BY FELLOW RESEARCHERS. THE JAN VAN EYCK ACADEMIE FACILITATES AN ADVISORY FRAMEWORK FOR INDIVIDUAL AND COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS.

THE FOLLOWING ADVISING RESEARCHERS ARE ACTIVE IN THE JAN VAN EYCK --> NORMAN BRYSON, MARC DE KESEL, SUE GOLDING <JOHNNY DE PHILO>, SUCHAN KINOSHITA, JOUKE KLEEREBEZEM, AGLAIA KONRAD, EVA MEYER, JOHN MURPHY, DEIMANTAS NARCIVIOUS, ERAN SCHAERF, FILIEP TACQ.

Information on the departments of Fine Art, Design and Theory, as well as details about conditions, grants and registration can be found at >www.janvaneyck.nl<. Application forms can be downloaded. Application along with research proposals, in English, should be submitted before 1 June 2002 to the Jan van Eyck Academie, Academieplein 1 NL 6211 KM Maastricht, to the attention of Leon Westenberg T +31 <0>43.3503724 F +31 <0>43.3503759 E >leon.westenberg@janvaneyck.nl<

Current research projects and productions include --> Jan van Eyck house style <by Giselle de Oliveira Macedo>; En passant <ongoing seminar by Sue Golding <Johnny de philo>, Design Recast <symposium curated by Jouke Kleerebezem, 12-14.04.2002>; Annual report of the Jan van Eyck <by Christos Lialios>; The Aesthetics of the Archive in 20th century Photography <ongoing seminar by Norman Bryson>, Optical Poetics & the Techne of Time <digital camera project by Maarten Vanvolsem>; Peter Watkins <a workshop by Deimantas Narcivius>, bloom <a publication by Christos Lialios>, Soft, soft, soft <film by Javier Marchà>; How the western image became realistic and troubled the modern <ongoing seminar by Marc De Kesel>, Nineteenth century city photography in Bruges, Bologna and Maastricht <workshop curated by Dirk Lauwaert, 03.05.2002>; YHTIANDRUS <website by Pavel Braila>; Book Club/Sociobiology/Physiognomy <three films by Daniel Herskowitz>; Jan van Eyck Researchers' Guide <by Tim Baumgarten>, Emotions and Perception <a seminar/workshop by Nadezda Cacinovic>, in/visible <a book by Manuel Räder>, Sound <a workshop by Ulrike Haage>, Design and communication in Africa <a research project initiated by Filiep Tacq>, Was tun, wenn nichts geschieht <publication after the exhibition in the Gesellschaft für aktuelle Kunst, Bremen>, tAip <a workshop/publication series by Christos Lialios>, Poetics of Provocation <slides/DVD-production by Ajamu>, Undercover Autobiography <an ongoing seminar by Eva Meyer>, This afternoon, life drawing classes <series of lectures organized by Christos Lialios & Manuel Räder>.

Guests in 2002 <so far> include --> Jan Abrams, Iain Chambers, Paul Elliman, N'Gone Fall, De Geuzen, Karsten Gilhuis, Alexandra Giza, Rich Gold, Melle Hammer, Thomas Hirschhorn, Karel Martens, Malcolm McCullough, Paul Mijksenaar, Roelof Mulder, Philippe Pirotte, Fiona Raby, Maarten de Reus, Mart Rozenbeek, Eva Schmidt, John Thackara, Ronald van Tienhoven, Daniel van der Velden, Sue Walker.

An update of the programma of the Jan van Eyck can be found at >www.janvaneyck.nl/programme/proarc.html<



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WHAT CULTURE WANTS
WHAT CULTURE NEEDS
AN ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF
INDEPENDENT PUBLISHING
OR
THE NICE AND SMALL
OF EMIGRE MUSIC
BY
KENNETH FITZGERALD

TEXT: CHOLLA WIDE BOLD & WIDE BOLD ITALIC 8/12 POINT
CHAPTER INTROS: CHOLLA WIDE ULTRA BOLD 10/12
RUNNING HEADS: CHOLLA SANS BOLD 6/6 POINT
PULL QUOTES: CHOLLA WIDE ULTRA BOLD 18/18 POINT
SIDE BAR ON PAGE 50: CHOLLA SANS BOLD ITALIC 8/12

A number of cultural concerns arise when considering a project like Emigre Music – a small distribution, low profile creative forum. The first and most profound is questioning how value is established. In the music business, high stature is given to artists who possess a major label contract. It's a given: everyone wants to be in the *Big Time*. Many of the perks are obviously advantageous and concrete: large budgets to produce your music, promotional capabilities to make listeners aware of its existence, and distribution networks so it can be easily purchased.

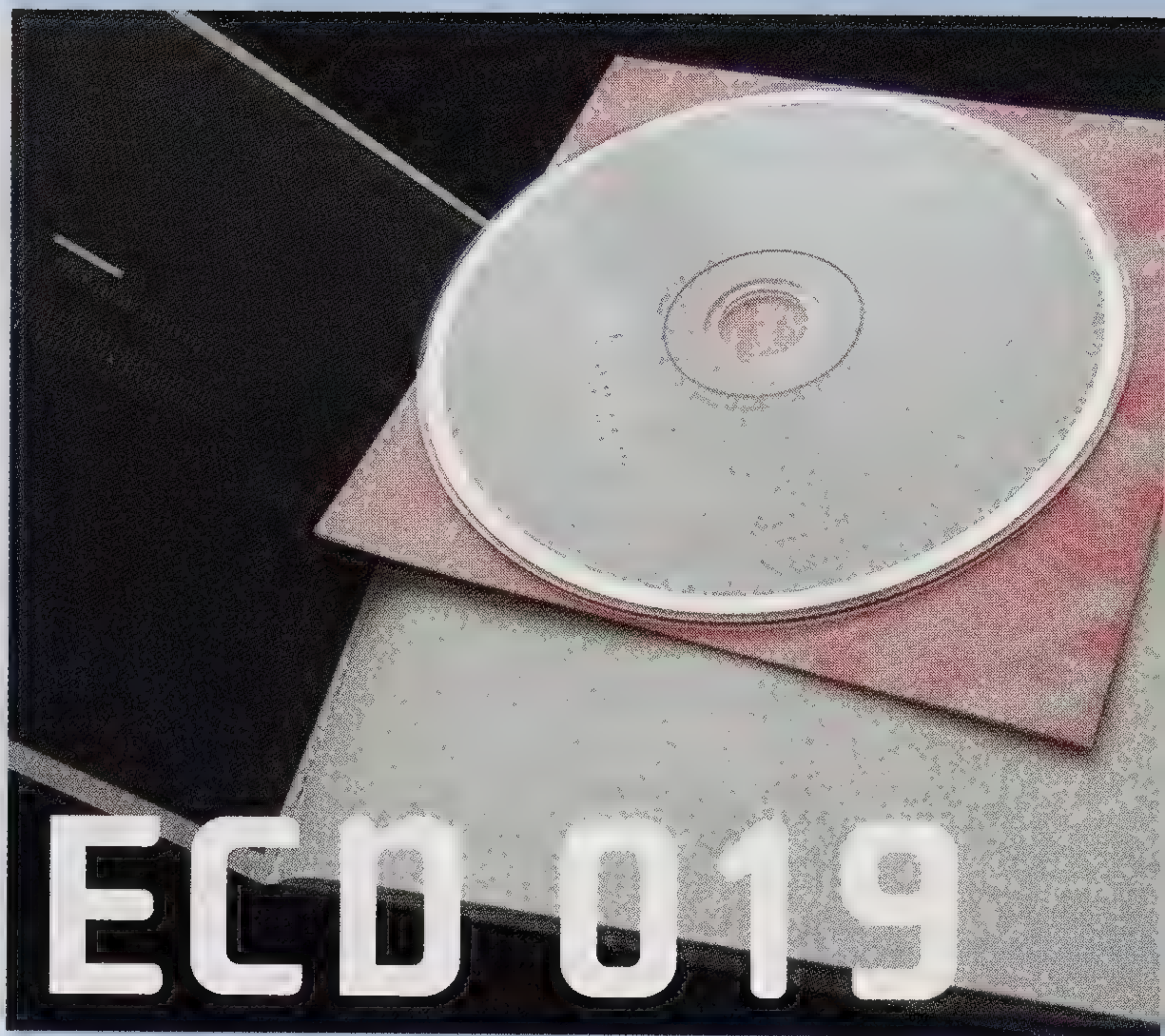
There is also a significant intangible benefit: the legitimacy of having “made it.” This status comes only tangentially from the quality of the music. Considering the significant financial investment a major label is making in signing an artist, to do so is understandably seen as a mark of seriousness. The logo of a major label on a release is an imprimatur. So, inevitably, validation resides in terms defined by corporate music. Supporting and advancing this power is only good business for the major labels, as it is for majors in all the arts industries. Having the resources to spread their values, it becomes natural to regard this as given; major labels have the major artists.

When a creative endeavor becomes a product, profound changes occur in the endeavor and the product. The interests of the endeavor (what music demands) can be distinct from that of the product (what the market demands). And when a corporation is involved, the distinction is greater. For them, particularly in this era of mega mergers, investment in product demands steep returns. Just selling product won't satisfy shareholder expectations. Their concern is the marketability of the artist, which engages image almost irrespective of the music.

Challenging music is difficult music – difficult to sell. Packaging a known quantity to an identified audience holds better odds than trying to “break” a new artist. In an ideal world, music would be subjectively judged on the merits of the individual performances. The public would buy the music it liked. However, everything is not equal. Being heard is complicated and controlled. And what is being purchased is often only incidentally listenable.

As we're stuck with our capitalist system, we need to thread through the tangle of economic vs. esthetic valuations. It's not simply a braiding going on. And we must rejoin with a more vital question than: *Is Bigger Better?* It is, however, a place to start. Must a willingness to be in the “minors” be regarded as a failing (either as a musician or a label)? As regards the musician, how big an audience must an artist aspire to in order to be legitimate? How narrowcast can your message be and still

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EMIGRE NO. 62

**BEING HEARD IS COMPLICATED
AND CONTROLLED. AND WHAT IS
BEING PURCHASED IS OFTEN ONLY
INCIDENTALLY LISTENABLE.**

deserve hearing? And, as regards the music purveyor, how little can you allow the business to affect the valuation of whom you present? (I.e., how much of a loss can you absorb?) Is it worthwhile to anyone (yourself, the artist, the audience) to operate at such a low level? Is music that is barely heard any better than music that is unheard?

When we answer these questions, we find that the ability to make significant profits is valued over the ability to make music. Legitimacy lies in numbers. However, who establishes the cut off point for legitimacy – and how – is left unsaid. Why shouldn't an audience of (for instance) 500 be worthy of respect? Apart from lesser income potential, there's no answer.

If you have major labels, you must have minors. Big labels are presented as the adults that indies mature into. While this casts the indies in an unfavorable light, it does point to a common life cycle of labels. Once upon a time, there were nothing but indies in the music business. A host of local labels competed with the nationals. Some, unfortunately, owed their existence to prejudice: commercially segregated "minority" labels. (Everything is not equal.) As the music business became big business, corporate music gathered strength. There was too much money to be made for music to be left in the hands of enthusiasts. Indies of varying size continued to exist, but usually with the life support of a licensing/distribution deal with a major.

In the 70s Punk rock returned a DIY indie attitude to music and brought a group of smaller, now legendary (and defunct) labels to the scene: Bomp, Stiff, Factory, Rough Trade. After first dismissing them, the bigger labels soon utilized them as scouts. However, the small labels' attitudes were just as important to their audiences as the music they provided. Much of that attitude was a disdain for the corrupt practices of the music industry. An artist decamping from an indie to a major label was a repudiation of creative ideals. Bigger wasn't better. The Los Angeles band X leaving Slash Records for Elektra in 1982 brought the band charges of selling out. Since then, a minor label credibility has been established. It may have been more than just a legal necessity that the Sub Pop logo appeared on Nirvana's *Nevermind*, sharing space with David Geffen's DSG. The Sub Pop logo carried a credibility with Nirvana's audience that DSG never could.

Sentiments toward big labels have only continued to deteriorate.* More musicians are now willfully foreclosing the prospect of a major deal. To do so can only mean that both the major label aura and effectiveness have waned. The reasons



FOR MANY ARTISTS, THE MECHANICS OF DISTRIBUTION AND PROMOTION CAN'T BE SEPARATED FROM THE VALUES ESPOUSED IN THE MUSIC. IT TAKES MORE THAN SINGING A PROTEST SONG TO EFFECT CHANGE.

musicians are abandoning the major labels are both pragmatic and idealistic. Encompassing both is the desire for control. Accepting and taking hold of commercial concerns may lead to a music business about music, not business. And that musical music will be more satisfying for musician and audience – and be commercially successful as a result.

The politics associated with creativity – the economics of success – have been highlighted in interesting ways with independent labels. For many artists, the mechanics of distribution and promotion can't be separated from the values espoused in the music. It takes more than singing a protest song to effect change.

Fugazi had their own label (Dischord) and priced their CDs at \$10 and shows at \$5, much less than the industry standard (wildly inflated) prices. Ani DiFranco has built her career on her own Righteous Babe label. At first, she distributed her own cassettes out of a newcomer's necessity, but later by choice. Perhaps no better fusion of musical and business conviction exists than in the name of Sleater-Kinney's label: Kill Rock Stars.

Now there is a growing number of established artists dropping their major labels for the complete control of independent distribution, from John Prine to Prince. With new networks for recording and distributing, musicians are increasingly turning their backs on corporate music. With the Internet, artists can keep in touch with their fan base relatively cheaply and effectively. Ironically, major labels can now be used as mere springboards to gather an audience. Having established their following, the artist can go private and make their own decisions along the esthetic/economic axis.

Disgusted with the exploitative practices of the music industry, many musicians have become savvy business people themselves – producers in entirety. Leaving the business end to the business people often leads to less freedom to make music, particularly the kind the musician wants to make.

However, music has long been about more than the aural sensations. Music is, like everything else in consumer culture, subsumed in the spectacle (to modify the ideas of Guy Debord). For centuries, music was a small scale, almost exclusively intimate event. It was usually private, since music was performed by and in small groups. When economics allowed for group performances (symphony orchestras performing before large audiences), the spectacle of music began its ascendancy.

For performer and audience alike, a significant part of performing and consum-



SO WHAT IF YOU HAVE NO IMAGE?
DO YOU THEN HAVE NO MUSIC?
CAN YOU SHUN THE SPECTACLE AND
HAVE A CAREER?

ing music is exploring and assuming identities. It's about image. It's the reason why most music packaging has a photo of the artist on the cover.

Many people go into music so they can be rock stars. Sure, making creditable music plays some part, but not necessarily the primary one. And buying music also entails an identity assumption: "I want to be like them, not me." To attend the shows of even "minor" artists is to behold a psychic vampirism. Rock stars whining about the perils of adulation is commonplace. But few, such as Cat Stevens, say it, mean it, then reject their role in the spectacle.

Not having an easy-to-package image represses more musicians than lack of talent. ("Lack of charisma can be fatal," sez Jenny Holzer.) So what if you have no image? Do you then have no music? Can you shun the spectacle and have a career? The technology of contemporary music has allowed musicians to be one person bands, and many groups are studio-only entities. It's tough to maintain a spectacle with just a disc of music.

Finally, it's likely that a label like Emigre Music generates too much cognitive dissonance for potential listeners. But rather than questioning their enterprise, we might question our context. The broader category of Emigre Music transcends that of record label. It is another example of creative people fostering the creativity of others for the sake of creativity.

This impulse is notable across the arts, both for its generosity of spirit and dubious commercial viability. In the fine arts, we have artists opening galleries and curating; in literature, writers founding journals and editing anthologies; in film, directors forming production companies to make movies. It's an essential aspect of many artists' creative lives to facilitate others' works. The drive to be a cultural participant expands beyond putting one's own efforts out. Bringing other voices and visions to the public completes a circle. Rather than being selfish, art is selfless.

Many record labels began with the musicians' desire to control their music. Their experiences with the music industry often led them to sign other artists. The Beatles' Apple Records (Badfinger, James Taylor) or Frank Zappa's Bizarre/Straight label (Captain Beefheart, Alice Cooper) are examples of such ventures. Likewise, David Byrne and Peter Dinklage are two artists whose personal music devotions led them to form labels, Luaka Bop and Real World, respectively.

The compulsion to create a forum for music without regard for profits is not limited to performers. German emigre Arthur Lion was one such enthusiast who founded Blue Note Records. His commitment to the music can't be denied. And, of

course, the label also stands as a design icon with the album covers of Reid Miles. Is it coincidence that singular music visions often engender exceptional graphic design? (To name two contemporary labels and their designers: Manfred Eicher's ECM with Barbara Wojirsch and Ivo Watt-Russell's 4AD and Vaughn Oliver.) Maybe Emigre just decided to eliminate the middle man.

Such a motivation could, of course, be seen as self-serving. Emigre's self-produced publications, not only Emigre Music, invite the designation of "vanity press." So would many other indie labels. But this derogatory term exists solely to legitimize someone else's opinion – frequently that of established interests. Self-publication, self-determination is suppressed intellectually and physically. You'll take what we give you, say the mainstream producers.

As a label grows in profitability, what they increasingly deliver is safety. Decision making is driven by the business demand for the maintenance and growth of profits. This drives the life cycle of success; risk-taking devolves into defense of the *status quo*. Whether it be individuals or groups, once a success is achieved, everyone begins working to maintain the status. The eternal irony is that the qualities that bring success – daring, invention, liberty – are abandoned when recognition is gained.

To encourage artists and labels to be adventurous, we must reconsider our expectations. For creative people, is the desire to reach millions of people – moving millions of units – a creative impulse or a commercial one? It is sad to consider that we may have lost the ability to appreciate something done well if it doesn't include the desire to make big money out of it. For some artists, making money is enough. Others are content with whatever coterie permits them to keep making music. An obsession over how many "other" people are in agreement about an artist's value creates personal insecurity. When placed upon the artist, this anxiety can marginalize an activity worthy of respect.

With labels, we can question if they must aspire to major status – or even stay in business long-term. It's unfortunate that Stiff Records no longer exists. However, I don't consider their enterprise a failure because they went belly up. Indie labels can be temporary phenomena, creating and defining a cultural time then passing on. ("It's better to burn out than fade away," Neil Young sez.) While this may not be a viable "business" model, it may be a vital "cultural" one. This is not to say that the only good label is a dead label. ECM and 4AD venture on, remaining true to their visions and fertile as ever. The ability to combine business acumen and a sin-

gular vision is something to cherish.

The questioning should extend into ideas of profit and promotion. If you're into marketing creativity for its own sake, breaking even is a success story. A small financial loss is a victory if you can keep going. And must a label strive to place its product everywhere? That effort alone can sap all of a company's resources. In a society saturated with product, it is refreshing to encounter temperance. In addition, the delights of self-discovery are undervalued. There's added pleasure in finding something on your own – not due to a PR push.

The value of an indie label for musicians and audience alike is independence. It is the opportunity to make new meanings. The continued existence of small labels provides ongoing diversity protection for the culture as a whole. The consolidation of major labels into a few multinational media empires is the definition of inbreeding. Although I admit when generating this metaphor, I'm not at all sure what a "healthy" culture would be like (or if one ever existed or does now exist). For me, the multifold aspect is inherent in the term "culture." You have possibilities.

These possibilities are due to strong personalities, personalizing the music. Labels with a strong commitment to music are usually formed by and suffused with the spirit of a single person, or a few, who formed the label because of their devotion to the music. There is the ability to forge new connections amongst artists, their supporters, and their audiences. The terms of these relationships cannot be free of commercial considerations or imageering. However, music will be the purpose and cause of the affiliation.

Emigre Music is, for me, the ultimate example of an impulse shared by many music lovers – those with big LP/CD/tape collections. The enthusiasm for the music makes sharing it imperative, so you make cassettes for friends. Sometimes, it's a proactive gesture: "You've got to hear this." I've made tens of these tapes, samplers with a variety of artists and anthologies of a favorite musician. To know I've turned a friend onto something new, something I love, is its own reward. It's communication, not product.

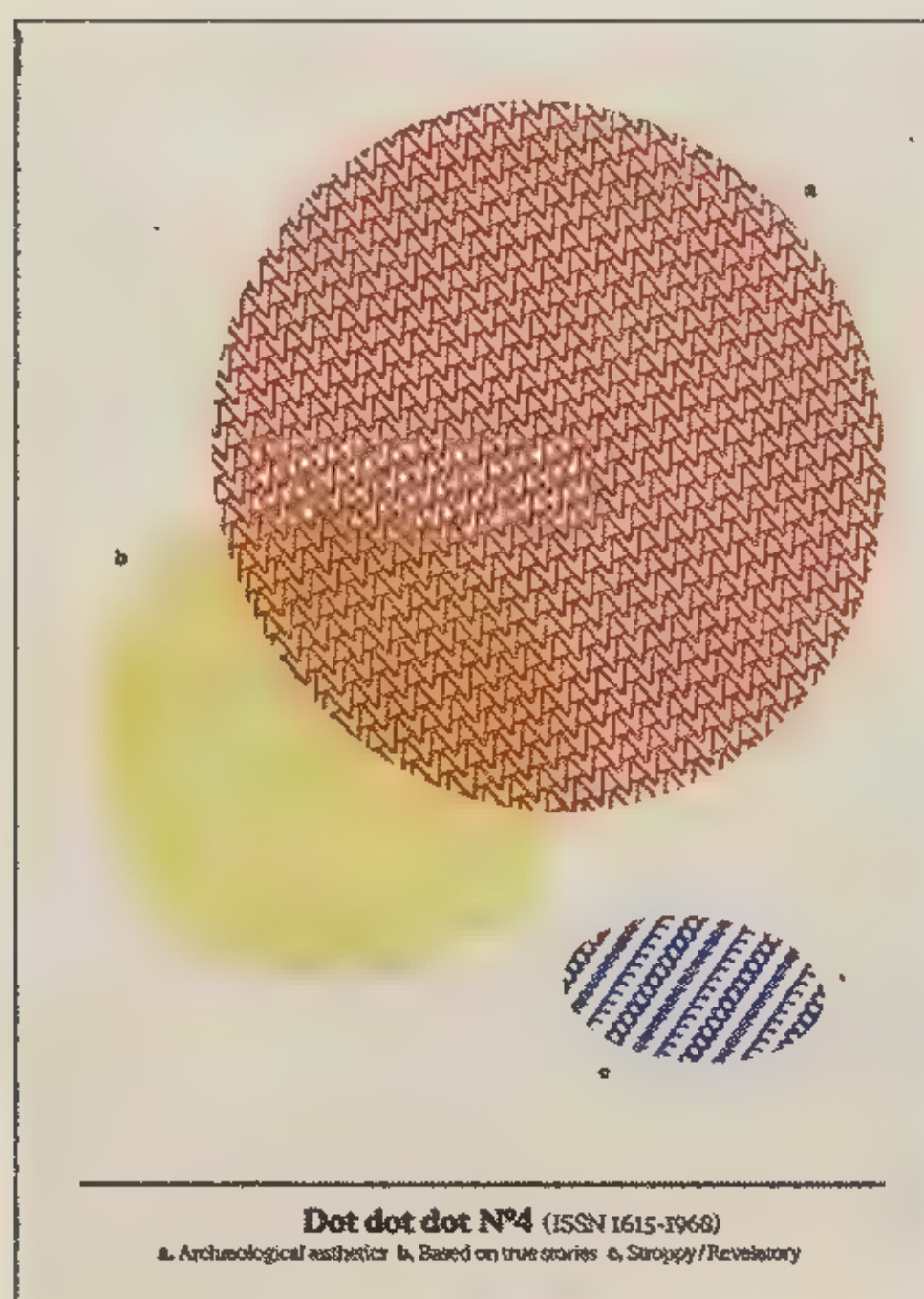
Emigre Music is this impulse writ large by folks experienced in grasping the methods of production. "You've got to hear this." That's what trumps aura: a personal recommendation. An Emigre Music release may not end up your favorite CD – but it might. You've already partially signed on to their taste if you're reading this. And at Emigre's prices, they're practically giving them away...

** The latest fracture in the business of music is downloadable music from the web, eliminating the need to manufacture and ship products. The artistic downside to MP3s has been prominently played in the media's coverage of Napster. Having been digitized and made web-accessible, music underwent another conceptual transformation. It became the equivalent of any other software program – freeware. Ignored was the reality that money must be placed somewhere in the system or musicians are unable to make any further music. What was lost was the musicians' ability to receive recompense for their labor. Simply, it wasn't free to create the music.*

The argument has been put forth (usually by advocates of free music on line) that free music actually encourages more people to buy the authorized products. Their proof for this contention is the corporate profits that ensued even after widespread home taping of albums. Ultimately though, the musicians' subservient role in the industry remains unchanged. Whatever gains musicians have made with the ability to market their music independent of major labels are erased by an audience unwilling to pay a fair price for it.

The real impact of free downloadable music is still speculative. It's likely that some portion of those people downloading the music would have paid for it if there were no Napsters. Many may have gone on to purchase the product legally after getting a free taste. For whatever reason, millions of people ignored the reality that musicians make their livelihood from audiences paying for their efforts. Perhaps the rationale is no more complicated than when offered something free and easy, people will grab for it, regardless of the long-term consequences. Whatever the reason, a social contract was broken between artist and audience.

That music is primarily image and largely spectacle may have contributed to or caused the break. Music is incidental to the overall spectacle: the arena tour, the video, the appearance on E.T. If you paid big bucks for the concert, you might feel that you've already made your contribution to the cause. Even if you didn't, you see the excess surrounding many rock stars and say, hey, they can afford it. Since you've bought into an abstraction – an image – you're disconnected from having affected a person.

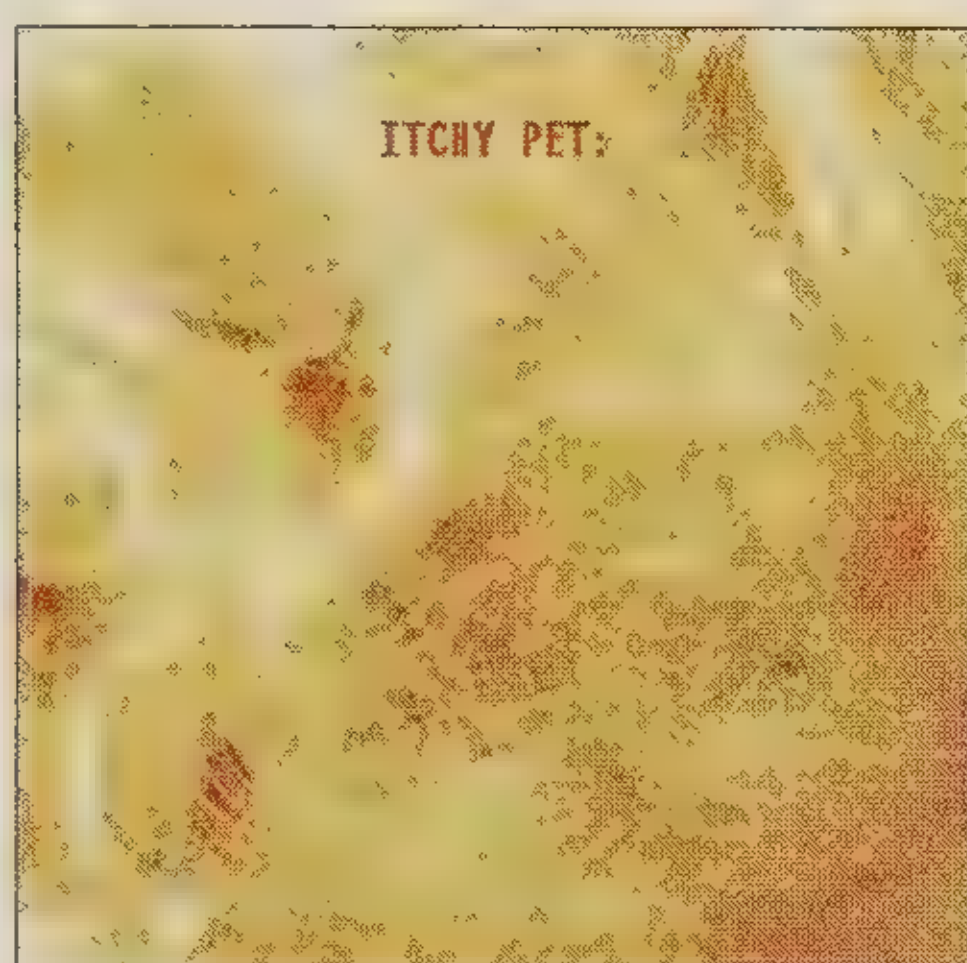


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DotDotDot #4

EDITED BY STUART BAILEY AND PETER BILAK

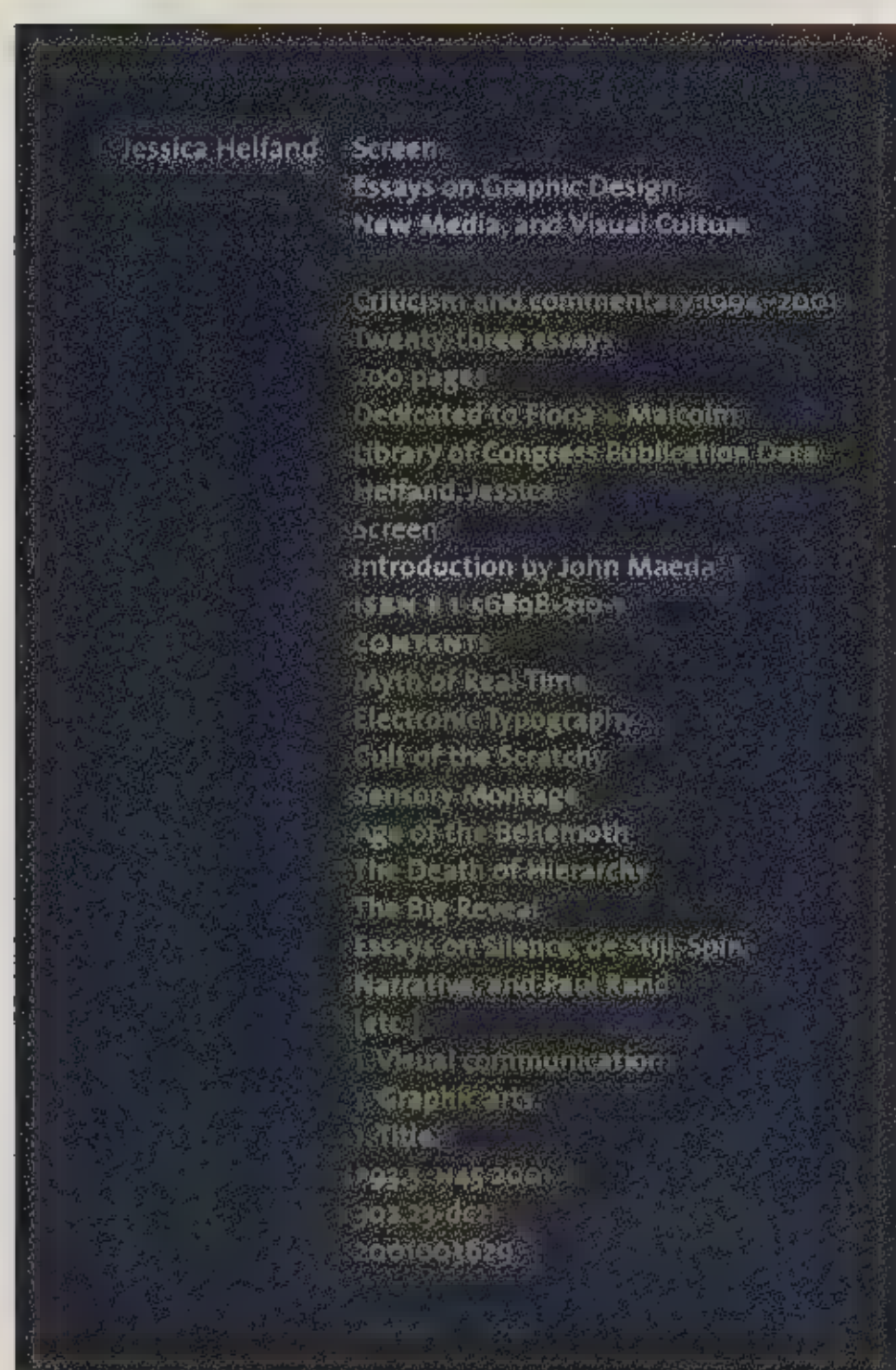
The producers of DotDotDot, modestly describe their magazine as “Not exactly a graphic design magazine, more an attempt.” Well, it’s an impressive attempt, and graphic designers won’t be disappointed. Richard Hollis discusses the work of Karl Gerstner, Gerry Beegan interviews cultural critic Judith Williamson, Experimental Jetset demands “Disrepresentationism” now!, Peter Bilak has some thoughts on Milan Kundera and translation, Paul Elliman blows his top over pop-up windows, and Sytze Steenstra discusses the work of David Byrne. All this, and articles by Steve Rushton, Robin Kinross, Foundation 33, Roger Bridgman, Petr van Blokland, Steve Rushton, Emily King and others. 104 pages, 6.5 x 9.25 inches, softcover, perfect bound | \$12.00



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Screen: Essays on Graphic Design, New Media, and Visual Culture By Jessica Helfand

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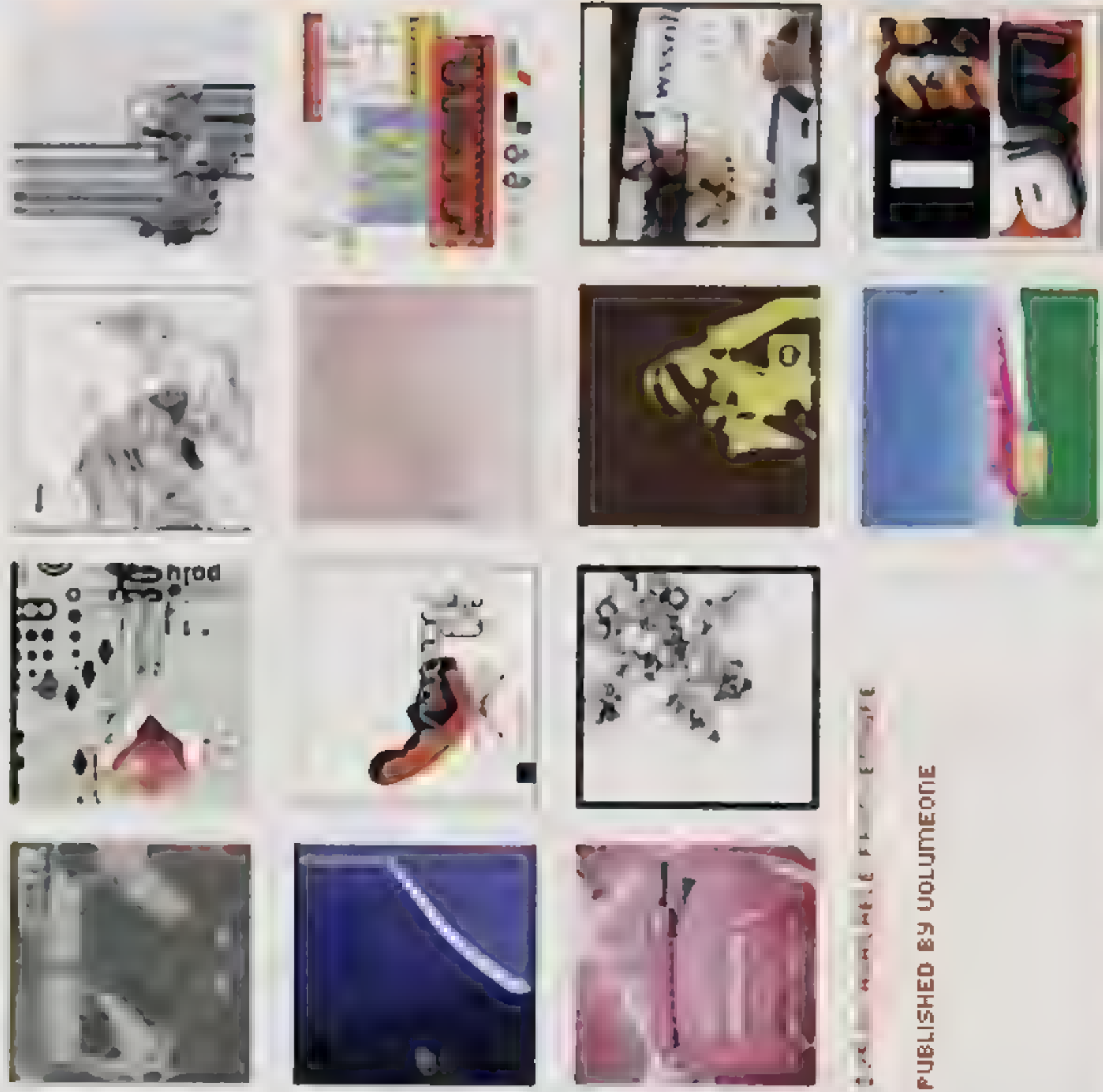


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AABBBCCDDDEEFFGGHHIIJJKKLLMM

HOLIDAY RANCH

AABBBCCDDDEEFFGGHHIIJJKKLLMM

Leisure Script & Marquee

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSs

Lamp lighter Script

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOo

MIRAGE BAZAAR

CCDDDEEFFGGHHIIJJKKLLMMNN

VEGAS CARAVAN

AABBBCCDDDEEFFGGHHIIJJKKLLMM

MIRAGE ZANZIBAR

CCDDDEEFFGGHHIIJJKKLLMMNN

LAS VEGAS TO ROME

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

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AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJj

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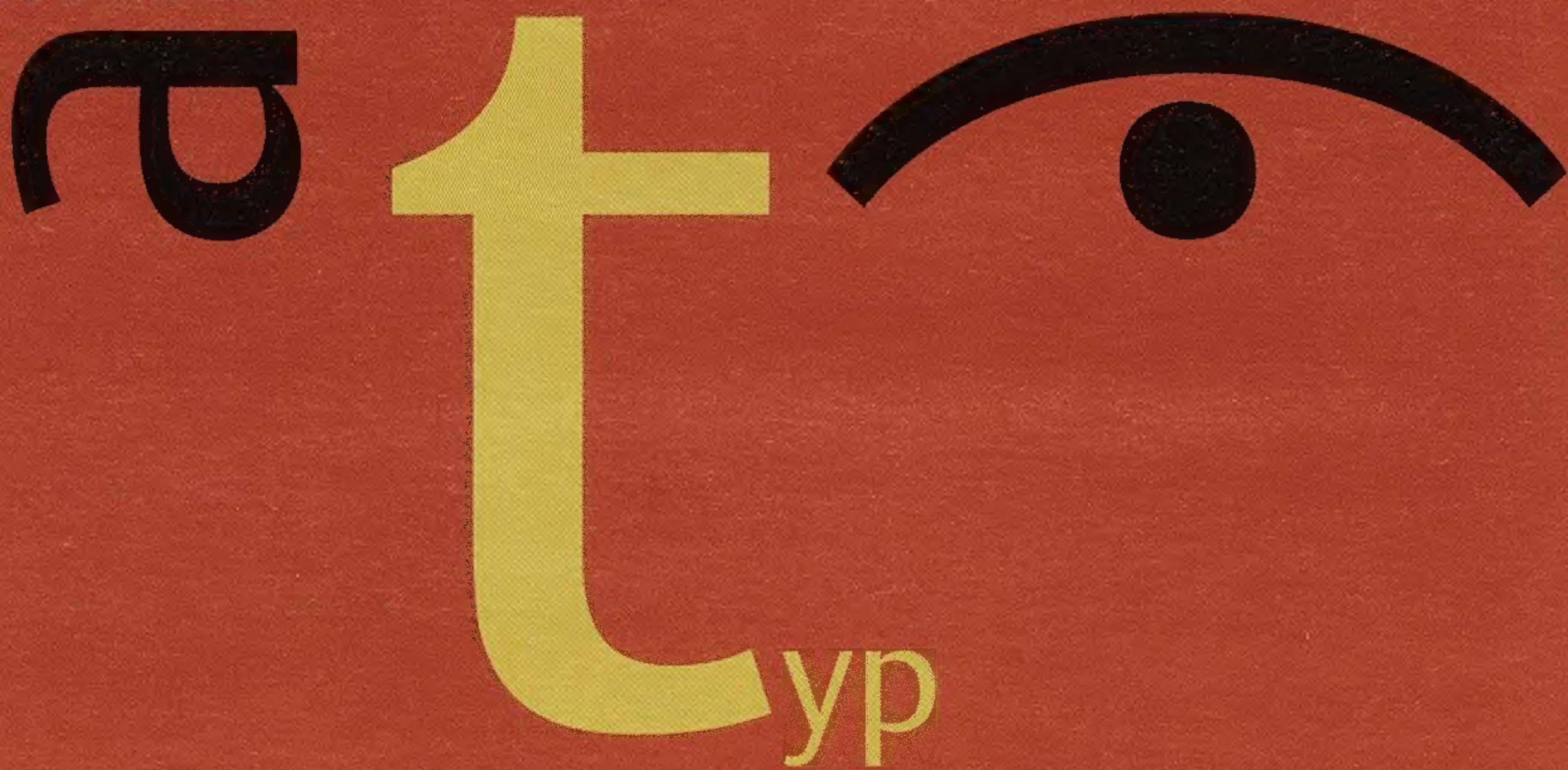


SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

They were going to ship James out to Guam right after Honey Barbara did their interview on Texas Public Radio. I asked him if he would miss playing his guitar, stationed out there in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Hell yes! he said. He had toyed with the idea of bringing his new fretless. But it wasn't going to happen. Then, at the very last minute, they changed their mind, and James was put on hold again, waiting for further instructions. That's Ross's place in the photo. The add-on section on the right is where *I-10 & W. AVE.* was recorded. Copies of the album are still available at www.emigre.com at \$7.95 plus shipping.



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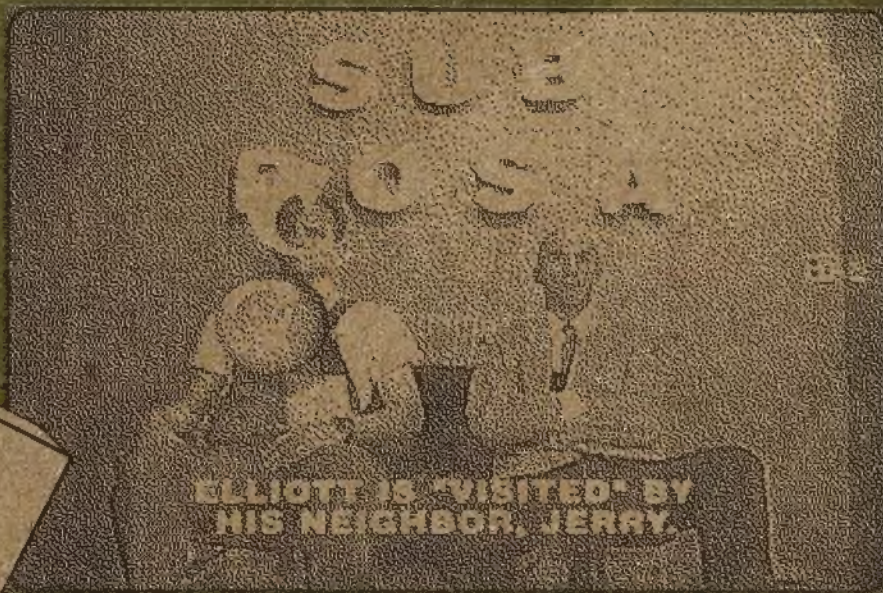
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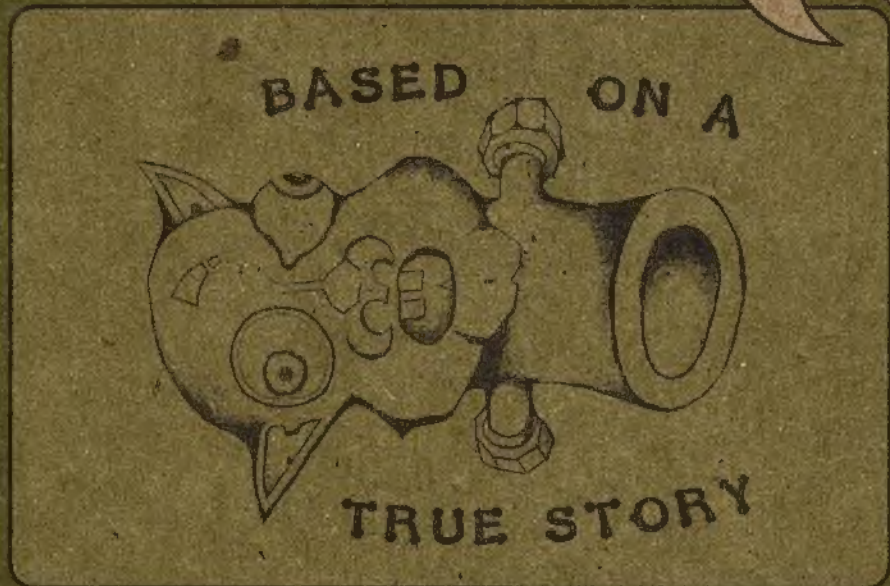
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